

REMARKS

INTRODUCTION:

New claim 7 is added. Claims 1-7 are pending and under consideration.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103:

Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sagawa et al. in view of Nakayama et al. (U.S. Patent 5,154,978).

Claim 1 recites that the filling material has a particle size between .1 and 15 microns. In item 9 of the present Office Action, the Examiner refers to column 9, lines 42-43 of Sagawa et al., which state that a thickness of the "protective resin coating is desirably from .5 to 300" microns. However, this portion of the reference refers to the thickness of the layer, not the size of the particles forming the layer. Thus, this portion of the reference does not disclose the claimed feature.

Item 9 of the present Office Action also refers to column 7, line 56 to column 8, line 12, column 9, lines 27-47, column 10, lines 5-23 and column 12, lines 53-68 as teaching these features. However, as discussed below, none of these portions appear to teach or suggest the claimed particle size. It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner explain how these portions disclose the claimed feature.

Column 7, lines 56-68 teaches filling isolate clearances. This is done to reinforce the skeleton of the powder compacted layer, not to decrease the surface roughness, which is the purpose of the claimed filler. In fact, line 61 states that the clearances can be "partially filled." However, a partially filled clearance would not achieve the reduced surface roughness of the present invention.

Column 8, lines 1-12 also refer to the resin layer as a strengthening layer, not a layer which reduces surface roughness.

Column 9, lines 27-47 teach that a resin "smoothens" the coating surface (line 37). Thus, this portion does not teach that the resin smoothens the magnet body. Furthermore, this portion does not appear to teach the claimed particle size. Instead, lines 42-44 discuss the

thickness of the entire layer, which may be from .5 to 300 microns. It appears that the Examiner incorrectly construes the thickness to correspond to the claimed particle size.

Column 10, lines 5-23 teach impregnating pores of a resin-bonded magnet to improve corrosion resistance. However, the claimed particle size is not taught, and this process is not performed to reduce surface roughness.

Column 12, lines 53-68 appear to teach that the resin layer can be used to change the hardness and mitigate striking forces. However, the claimed particle size, and the use of resin to reduce surface roughness are not taught.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections is requested.

Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sagawa et al. in view of Nakayama et al. and in further view of Strnat.

Strnat does not overcome the deficiencies in Sagawa and Nakayama discussed above.

NEW CLAIM

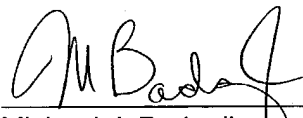
New claim 7 is added and recites that the filling material directly fills in the depressions. It is respectfully submitted that the cited references do not teach or suggest this feature.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Preliminary Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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